

CS-2023 STEREO

MOSZKOWSKI

First Recorded Performance

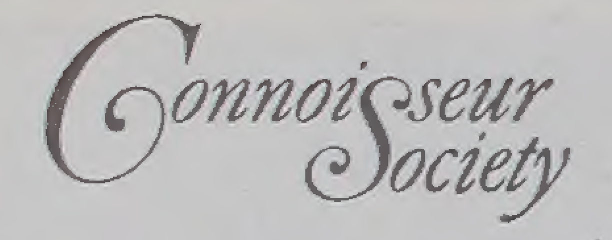
15 VIRTUOSO ÉTUDES, OP. 72

(complete)

ILANA VERED

piano

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First Recorded Performance

15 VIRTUOSO ETUDES, OP. 72 (complete)

Étincelles; Guitarre; En Automne; Valse Brillante in A-Flat; Siciliano

ILANA VERED

piano



ILANA VERED

Ilana Vered was born in Tel Aviv, Israel. At the age of 13 she went to Paris, and graduated with First Prize in Piano from the Conservatory at 15. Following this, Miss Vered was presented with orchestra in the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, an event hailed by the press. In 1957, Miss Vered toured France for Jeunesses Musicales, and in 1958 she gave an extensive concert tour in Brazil. Her New York debut, under the sponsorship of Young Concert Artists, took place in 1963, and was highly acclaimed. She has subsequently appeared in New York's Alice Tully Hall, in the Young Artists Series of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and as soloist with many American and European orchestras. Miss Vered plays the Baldwin piano.

Two subjects if broached, one rare interviewer wrote, would instantly lead to "unfruitful silence." One was music; the other, his personal life. Small wonder, then, we know so little about the otherwise affable, genial, handsome and humorous Moszkowski, alias Moritz or Maurice, born Maurycy, who rode so high in the sky of world musical opinion and who may, possibly, soon be returned to a more seemly place than present-day oblivion. Paderewski said of him, "After Chopin, Moszkowski best understands how to write for the piano." And let me say forthwith, contrary to general opinion, Moszkowski's music is **not** printed by a 19th-century romantic robot, signed by a facsimile machine and personalized by a computer of by-gone, faded conventions.

Moszkowski once actually shook Chopin's hand, and he played concertos four-hands with Liszt. He studied with Kullak, and later taught at that master's **akademie** in Berlin, for years. He was Chaminade's brother-in-law, and the Scharwenka brothers were his friends, close friends. When he went to them on one occasion to borrow money, Philipp Scharwenka for lack of the price for tobacco was smoking the sea-grass stuffing from his sofa. So, Moszkowski wrote his famous **Spanish Dances** instead. "I was in sore need of money," he said and his choice was between composing or borrowing.

He composed at the piano. "After all," he pointed out, "a painter has to look at a horse to paint one." His early **Serenade Op. 15, No. 1** was as earthwide popular in its day as the Beatles' "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" is in ours. It was played on every conceivable instrument everywhere, except, perhaps, the juice harp or the African thumb piano. An entire generation of American, English, German, French and Polish pianists were brought up on (and by) his pieces, **skizzen** really: **Valse mignonne** (darling little waltz), **Frühling** (spring), **Momento giocoso** (joyous moment), **Pensée fugitive** (fleeting thought), **Con mantilla y abanicc** (with mantilla and fan) . . . altogether more than 200 pieces amid 100 opus numbers. Do names like **En automne** (in autumn) or **Étincelles** (sparks) sound silly today? The pity is ours, not his.

Born where Germany and Czechoslovakia meet in Prussia, now Western Poland, this ardent Jew (he was proud when others of his day weren't necessarily so), equally fluent in German and French as well as his native Polish, abandoned Berlin as his headquarters in 1897 when he was already a ripened 43 years old. He moved to Paris, bought a grand house on the rue Blanche, and for his summer home rented the Villa Mürger in nearby Montigny only a short carriage ride away, yes, owned by the author of **La Vie de Bohème** which, yes again, Puccini made famous. After having sported a Prussian crewcut, he let his hair grow lavishly long, like Liszt. He stopped waxing the tips of his handlebar moustaches. Pupils came to him from everywhere, mostly Americans, and they took their lessons and sometimes meals with him in high ceilinged, tapestried rooms.

Although he charged his pupils exorbitant fees for lessons, he did not sell his loyalty. He once complained in print, "Americans come to Paris for atmosphere. Most of them bring their own atmosphere with them and live in it all the time they remain in France." As for his teaching methods, when asked (and if the talk didn't subside into "unfruitful silence"), he would say "Josef Hofmann is an example of my pedagogy." But there's some confusion here. In 1893 when Hofmann was supposed to be studying, Moszkowski told the press that there was nothing to teach that genius. Then again, Moszkowski was also fond of saying that "the difference between a Polish liar and any other nationality is the Pole believes what he says." He was also proud of being Polish, at a time when that wasn't exactly stylish either. Various piano manufacturers offered him vast sums of money to come to America and perform on their make of piano, but he always refused . . . even when he desperately needed money, and was smoking the stuffing of his own sofa.

There are bitter lessons in Moszkowski's life. First, fantastic success meant nothing to him—could not save the man. Second, he lived too long, long enough to see his health break and his financial and spiritual fortunes vanish into thinnest of thin air. Grove's Dictionary dismisses him: "He outlived his fame and died in poor circumstances." By 1908 he was already a recluse at the age of 54. Something by then was always wrong with his stomach. He was no longer seen at parties, at concerts or in society, and never at night anywhere. As for his unguent music, critics had begun sharpening their comments by saying it had "its same excellent qualities of 25 years ago, its same glaring defects—lack of virility and considerable amiability." **Musical Courier** in his still adoring, if not adored, America described his piano playing as "devoid of the masculine and the feminine."

Before World War I, Moszkowski was a widower. Whom had he married? Noone seems to remember. His life now was, as a friend described it, "no longer buoyed by ambition." He had lost a daughter. His son was summoned to the French Army. He stopped taking pupils in composition because they wanted to write like "artistic madmen such as Scriabin, Schönberg, Debussy, Satie. . . ." He sold all his copyrights and invested the enormous capital in German, Polish, Russian bonds and securities. In 1914 these were wiped from the face of the earth, like lives of so many young soldiers. Moszkowski was tragically and literally a pauper and too sick in body and mind to do anything about himself. In 1921, his friends who had derived so much success from his success combined forces in a grand testimonial concert at Carnegie Hall. It was the first time 14 pianos had ever been placed on stage at one time and the place looked like Baldwin's basement. (Busby Berkeley too, must have been in the audience.) Fourteen artists—Gabrilowitch, Grainger, Lhevinne, Backhaus, Bauer and others—played solo, four hands, six hands, 28 hands conducted by Damrosch. Hofmann was absent in body and spirit; at least Paderewski sent a telegram. The proceeds—some $10,000—was supposed to be given Moszkowski, but mysteriously the money never reached him until 1925, the year of his death at the age of 71. It was too late anyway. Life had ruined Moszkowski beyond redemption.

Moszkowski was a trapeze artist, a tightrope walker of the keyboard, as the splendidly terrifying Études of Virtuosity show clearly. Their heights are so dizzying you dare not look down at the abysses below. Always he gives beauty to cause pleasure. He makes the piano sound like pearls and diamonds, satins and silks, rubies and emeralds. Underneath his gymnastics lies a lovely soul at curiously disparate odds with the external man . . . the man, however, brought music and musical love into places where it had never reached before, or been accepted.

Faubion Bowers

SIDE ORDER AND TIMINGS

SIDE 1 — **15 Virtuoso Études, Op. 72**

Bd 1: No. 1 in E; No. 2 in Gm; No. 3 in G	5:15
Bd 2: No. 4 in C; No. 5 in C; No. 6 in F	4:38
Bd 3: No. 7 in E♭; No. 8 in C; No. 9 in Dm	5:08
Bd 4: No. 10 in C; No. 11 in A♭; No. 12 in D♭	4:14
	19:15

SIDE 2 — **15 Virtuoso Études, Op. 72**

Bd 1: No. 13 in A♭m; No. 14 in Cm; No. 15 in B	8:05
Bd 2: **Siciliano,** Op. 42, No. 2	2:58
Bd 3: **Valse Brillante** in A♭	4:43
Bd 4: **Étincelles,** Op. 36, No. 6	2:25
Bd 5: **En Automne,** Op. 36, No. 4	2:28
Bd 6: **Guitarre,** Op. 45, No. 2	2:51
	23:30

Producer: E. Alan Silver/Engineer: David B. Jones
Cover Photograph: M. Katims
Piano: Baldwin SD-10



SOUND IN THE SERVICE OF MUSIC

MOSZKOWSKI

15 Virtuoso Études, Op. 72

CS 2023 A
33 1/3 R.P.M.

Side 1
Stereo

Bd. 1: No. 1 in E; No. 2 in Gm; No. 3 in G 5:15
Bd. 2; No. 4 in C; No. 5 in C; No. 6 in F 4:38
Bd. 3: No. 7 in Eb; No. 8 in C; No. 9 in Dm 5:08
Bd. 4: No. 10 in C; No. 11 in Ab; No. 12 in Db 4:14

ILANA VERED, piano

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SOUND IN THE SERVICE OF MUSIC

MOSZKOWSKI

15 Virtuoso Études, Op. 72

CS 2023 B
33 1/3 R.P.M.

Side 2
Stereo

Bd. 1: No. 13 in Abm; No. 14 in Cm; No. 15 in B 8:05
Bd. 2: Siciliano, Op. 42, No. 2 2:58
Bd. 3: Valse Brillante in Ab 4:43
Bd. 4: Etincelles; Op. 36, No. 6 2:25
Bd. 5: En Automne, Op. 36, No. 4 2:28
Bd. 6: Guitarre, Op. 45, No. 2 2:51

ILANA VERED, piano

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